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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes a 1985 study during which 85 special library/information center managers from Melbourne, Australia, were interviewed to ascertain their continuing professional development activities, needs, and aspirations. Major areas of investigation included the extent and nature of organizational support for continuing professional development; the formal continuing education activities and professional involvement of those interviewed; and participants' perceptions of their present and future needs for continuing professional development. The background of the study is discussed; related studies are summarized; and the methodology and data collection are detailed. Study results indicated that over 70% of the interviewees had participated in at least one workshop, conference, or seminar in the last 2 years; that organizations, not individuals, were the major providers of funds for continuing professional activities and the amounts spent were relatively low; and that the major constraints to such participation were lack of time and lack of suitable courses to attend. It is concluded that information technology and management skills are the major areas of need in continuing professional development, and that improvements must be made in meeting the needs for present and future professional development for information service professionals. The text is supplemented with 23 statistical tables, and references and a 33-item bibliography are provided. The interview schedule and cover letter are appended. (Author/KM)

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SPECIAL LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CENTRE MANAGERS

Their Continuing Professional Development

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

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Department of Information Services
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1986

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SPECIAL LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CENTRE MANAGERS - THEIR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Report of a research study undertaken in 1985

by

Marianne Broadbent and Kerry Grosser

Department of Information Services
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
Melbourne, 1986

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Synopsis

During April and May 1985, 85 Melbourne based special librarians and information centre managers were interviewed to ascertain their continuing professional development activities, needs and aspirations. Major areas of investigation were the extent and nature of organisational support for continuing professional development, the formal continuing education activities and professional involvement of those interviewed, and participants' perceptions of their present and future needs for continuing professional development.

It was found that over 70% of interviewees had participated in at least one workshop, conference or seminar in the last two years; organisations, not individuals, were the major providers of funds for continuing professional activities and the amounts spent were relatively low; the major constraints to such participation were given as lack of time and lack of suitable courses to attend. Continuing professional development areas of need were clustered around those with a focus on information technology and management skills.

This report details the findings of the study and discusses the implications for organisations, special library and information centre managers and staff, professional associations and educational institutions.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

During the past fifteen years, there has been increasing recognition that first-award professional courses are very much 'beginning professional education'. Schools which offer courses in the area of librarianship, information services and information management stress in their literature the changing nature of the workfield. In the past three years in Australia there have been a number of new first-award and post-basic courses established within the broad area of 'information studies' and these developments are continuing.

The environment which fosters such developments also affects those currently working in specialist information and information-intermediary roles, such as information officers, librarians, information service coordinators, records managers and others. People with positions in organisations such as chief information officer, technical information officer and chief librarian are working in dynamic environments. The initial and continuing education of such individuals should be a matter of concern to their organisations, to themselves, their colleagues, professional associations and to educational institutions.

This study began as an investigation into the continuing professional development needs of one sector of the information-handling workforce: information specialists employed in special libraries and information centres. While Australian studies had already been done into the continuing education needs of librarians in Victoria(1), the staff development practices of the larger libraries in Australia (2) and the continuing education needs of those in one particular region(3), there did not appear to have been any research study completed on the professional development activities and needs of special librarians and information centre workers.

The results of the study were seen as providing input into current and future courses at RMIT (and possibly elsewhere). At the time the study was commenced, RMIT's Department of Librarianship (now the Department of Information Services) had been actively reviewing its courses. A new Graduate Diploma in Information Services was planned to be introduced in 1986 and a post-basic inter-disciplinary Masters degree in 1987. The Department, too, is a regular provider of continuing education short courses.

The study was also seen as providing input to branch, section and national office holders of the Library Association of Australia (LAA). One of the researchers chaired the LAA's national Continuing Education Committee and was involved in policy and decision making related to continuing education activities.

1.2 Aim and Focus of the Study

The aims of the study were to identify the continuing professional development activities, organisational support, needs and priorities of those working in special libraries and information centres. A series of focus questions was developed from these aims:

- To what extent do organisations provide financial support for the continuing professional development needs of their staff?
- To what extent are those working in special libraries and information centres involved in workshops, seminars and conferences?
- What are the present professional development needs of this group of information specialists?
- What do they see as their needs for future professional development?
- Are there particular priority areas for present and future needs and are these related?
- What are the constraints to involvement in professional development activities?
- What are the preferred modes of learning for continuing professional development activities?

It was thought that some of the answers to these focus questions could be related to size and type of employing organisation, level of formal responsibility within the organisation, supervisory responsibilities, nature and level of education, and professional association membership.

1.3 Defining of Terms

The phrase **'continuing professional development'** has been used in this study rather than 'continuing education'. As Konn and Roberts point out(4) there is considerable terminological confusion and overlap in the use of terms in this area. In North American literature, 'continuing education' is used as a broad term, whereas this is not necessarily the case in other countries. In Australia, 'continuing education' has connotations of 'short courses' and does not necessarily include staff development activities. For the purposes of this study, the broader term **continuing professional development** was used to encompass those areas listed by Stone in her widely quoted 1974 definition of 'continuing education'.

Thus continuing professional development includes:

> ... advanced degree seeking (beyond the first professional degree) and management and communication training and incorporates all activities and efforts, formal and informal, by the individual to upgrade his knowledge, abilities and competencies and understanding in his field of work or specialisation so that he can become a more effective professional and be able to handle responsibilities of greater scope and accountability (5).

Such a definition includes staff development and other inservice training undertaken or conducted by employers.

1.4 Refining the Study Focus

The study was initially planned to involve one researcher with some financial assistance from the Jean Hagger Research Fund used to employ a second interviewer. Discussions amongst staff at RMIT led to the scope and nature of the study being expanded. Each year the fourth year students in the Research Methods class participate as interviewers and analysts in a 'real' project with the lecturer in charge of that subject. It was decided that the 'continuing professional development' study would be a very suitable project for this purpose and thus the number of people who could be involved in the study was expanded to 32. The principal investigators then were Marianne Broadbent and Kerry Grosser, with input and assistance from the thirty students in the Research Methods Class.

In the light of the aims of the study and the personnel available, it was decided that the most appropriate methodology was a survey which used a structured interview schedule as the main means of collecting data. The target group of the study became those who managed special libraries and information centres in the Melbourne metropolitan area.

2. RELATED STUDIES

2.1 Introduction

There has been a considerable amount of literature published in the broad area of 'continuing professional development' for libraries and other information specialists, particularly since 1977. While much of this literature simply describes programs and approaches of organisations and associations or presents the viewpoints of individuals, there has also been a number of research and development projects which are pertinent to the present study.

Perhaps one indication of recognition of the importance and standing of this area is the fact that the first World Conference on Continuing Education for the Library and Information Science Professions was held in August 1985(6). One of the outcomes of this conference was the establishment of a 'Continuing Education' Round Table by the International Federation of Library Associations.

This review of related studies will begin by focussing first on the Australian literature on the broad area of continuing professional development for library and information service workers. Then, other studies of relevance will be reviewed, particularly those which examine how to assess continuing professional development needs and the findings of studies which have examined the needs of particular sectors.

One criticism which may be made of this review is that it covers mainly library and librarian-oriented literature. Other 'information' terms were used in the literature search, but elicited mostly statements or viewpoints about the need for further work in this area. There appears to be a paucity of research studies of the continuing professional development needs of other information specialists, where these are not grouped together as, for example, 'continuing library and information science education'.

Studies and articles related to school librarians and media specialists are not included in this review. It was felt that the educational background, employing authorities and conditions of school librarians and media specialists were sufficiently different from other groups for their inclusion in the review of related studies to be of limited relevance.

2.2 Australian Literature

The Australian literature related to the continuing professional development of librarians and information centre workers includes a small number of studies, articles and conference papers. The studies will be examined first followed by brief comments on other references.

In 1975, Gatenby(7) investigated the personal and environmental factors affecting the demand for continuing education for librarians in Sydney. Gatenby's sample was 39 graduates from the Graduate School of Librarianship at the University of New South Wales. Despite the small size and restricted nature of the sample, Gatenby was able to link a number of 'environmental' factors to participation in continuing professional development activities.

In summary, Gatenby reported that:

> Conducive environmental factors in the library appeared to correlate more strongly with the amount of continuing education activity of librarians than other personal factors such as gender, age and type of library in which employed. Libraries in which some continuing education activities were held tended to have librarians on their staff who involved themselves in more continuing education activity both within and outside the library. The library was regarded as the body, next to the individual, with the greatest responsibility for continuing education(8).

Gatenby also looked at the decision making responsibilities of librarians and concluded that those who have some degree of decision making power in their own working situation tend to be engaged in more continuing professional development both within and outside their workplace. Librarians with more experience and those in smaller libraries appear to be more involved in professional activities outside the workplace. Gatenby concluded that the amount of continuing professional development activity reported was lower than expected and that efforts to increase the level of such activities should be directed towards involving institutions as well as individuals.

The most extensive study of the continuing education needs of librarians and possible approaches to meeting those needs was undertaken by McIntyre(9) from 1979. McIntyre reported that many of the findings and problems identified in his investigation were consistent with previous investigations into the continuing education experiences and needs of librarians in North America and the United Kingdom. 'Common themes' included:

> The lack of funds to develop programmes; the absence of systematic analysis in the profession; lack of definition regarding roles among libraries, professional associations, and library schools; poorly developed staff development programmes in many libraries; a lack of training skills and staff development expertise within many sectors of the profession; the absence of an effective reward system for participation in activities aimed at minimizing professional obsolescence; the need for improved dissemination of information regarding available opportunities;

> and the absence of learning materials that can be reused by groups of individuals so as to provide a more flexible and cost effective system of professional continuing education(10).

In addition to the detailed information contained in the full results of the study, McIntyre's work also includes an extensive literature review to 1980 and a discussion of the 'semantic maze' of 'learner needs' in professional continuing and adult education.

From September 1981 to June 1982 Trask(11) worked on a study project which examined the staff development programs and practices of Australia's larger libraries. Though the focus of the Trask study was specifically 'staff development', some of the summary points made concerning the general profile of staff development in large Australian libraries are relevant to that aspect of the present study. Amongst Trask's conclusions were the following:

> Staff development activities are offered but are sporadic with limited annual planning, co-ordination and evaluation; there are few written library policies or statements on staff development; a range of staff development opportunities are available but operating pressures place restrictions on staff involvement(12).

The 'search workshop strategy' of ascertaining the needs of 'library and information science workers' for continuing education was outlined by Richardson and Cook(13) after they used the model in the Riverina region. This strategy involved bringing together regional librarians to explore needs, resources available to meet the needs, and conditions that should be considered in planning regional continuing education activities.

As part of her study of non-library information handling positions, Schauder(14) studied the qualifications and 'post-experience' educational needs of the participants. Schauder reported that the overall impression given by over 75% of the group was an acute awareness of the need to keep abreast of the latest technological developments and management techniques, the difficulty of achieving this in area of constant change and the inadequacy of most existing courses to meet the multi-faceted requirements of their information-oriented jobs. Common themes in areas seen as needing further study included information technology (at a level that would assist in selecting automated systems appropriate to a particular application), the integration of office equipment, information retrieval systems and data base design, modern management skills and techniques, organisational behaviour and law and legislation related to particular areas of work. Formal courses of study should be oriented to 'practice', be offered on part-time basis and accredited by relevant associations.

These Australian studies indicate then, that there is a considerable demand and need for opportunities for continuing professional development for those working in the information services field. This is reinforced in other Australian literature, including the comments of Radford(15) and Lane(16). Policies, incentives and responsibilities for professional development and continuing education programs are also canvassed in these two articles. The matter of responsibilities is addressed too in Richards' plaintively titled 'Continuing education - whose baby?'(17) and Trask's paper 'Professional practice - whose responsibility'?(18).

In an essay first published in 1982, Wainwright claims that on the whole, continuing education activities remain 'small, underfinanced, noncumulative and uncoordinated particularly outside Sydney and Melbourne... Staff development has not received the importance it deserves.'(19) Wainwright further calls attention to the fact that few articles in this area have been published in either the Australian library journal or Australian academic and research libraries in the ten years between 1972 and 1982. Taylor(20) and Beaumont(21) refer to staff development practices in particular libraries while Reid-Smith(22) discusses the role of external studies in continuing professional education.

Lane(23) reported on research in progress concerning the information seeking behaviour of Australian special librarians. She concluded that special librarians 'attend meetings and conferences more so than our academic public school library counterparts, perhaps because of our relative professional isolation'(24).

The role and programs of one professional association, the Library Association of Australia (LAA) and problems in organising continuing education for the profession is the focus of a 1982 paper by Bryce(25). The LAA's 1984 Continuing Education Review (26) briefly reviews the continuing education policies and approach of the Association and recommends changes in the way in which national funds are allocated for continuing education activities.

This survey of the Australian literature has attempted to cover those studies, articles and papers which have been published in the broad area covered by this study. There have been a number of studies of 'needs' of different groups, though none in the area of the present study. It is salutory to realise though, that there is so little literature on the type and nature of programs which are and have been available or on the evaluation of programs.

2.3 Assessments of Needs

Different approaches to the assessment of needs for 'professional development' and 'continuing education' are examined in a number of substantial landmark studies emanating from the United States of America between 1969 and 1974(27). Following the establishment of CLENE (Continuing Library Education Network) in 1977, publications of CLENE suggest further needs assessment approaches and outline some

'model programs'(28). At the time of writing, the latest CLENE publication, released in 1985 was Continuing education needs assessment; a group interviewing technique(29).

Part two of Redfield's survey(30) of continuing education for the Association of College and Research Libraries describes existing needs assessment studies. In her now standard work 'Library staff development and continuing education(31), Conroy has an informative and useful chapter on ways to gather information on continuing education and staff development needs.

Most of the works referred to above emphasise the importance of the link between the needs assessment process and program development. As Bolles and Mortier indicate in a note to their article on statewide needs assessment, 'needs assessments are not an end in themselves. In the planning and conducting of a successful continuing education program for librarians, a needs assessment is only one element'(32).

As indicated in section 1.4, the present study was undertaken for a number of related purposes - input to RMIT Department of Information Services current and proposed for-credit courses and as continued input to the Department's Continuing Education program. In addition, one of the researchers has responsibilities for continuing education matters as an office-holder in the Library Association of Australia. Thus it was hoped that the findings of the study could indeed be related to the development of pertinent programs through both at least one educational institution and a major professional association.

The researchers acknowledge that there are a number of approaches to obtaining 'needs' information. The survey method using a structured interview schedule for data collection was chosen for this particular segment of the information workforce as it was seen as an effective way of reaching a large number of the relevant population who work in many different organisations and may have different needs from one another, as well as from, say, public librarians and records managers. It is planned to match the findings from this study with the needs assessment undertaken by branches of the LAA and with input from other informed sources, such as the Department's Course Advisory Committee.

2.4 Results of other 'Needs Assessment' Studies

In this section, the results of a number of studies in the broad area of continuing professional development published since 1980 are reviewed. While few of these studies include special librarians and information centre managers as part of the group studied, some discussion of their findings and of the 'needs assessment' approach used are considered to be relevant.

Using a mailed questionnaire which obtained a return rate of 83%, Neal(33) investigated the attitudes and experiences of librarians at the City University of New York (CUNY) and looked at the possible relevance of the variables of age,

sex, years since completion of library degree, job security, type of college library, career goals and additional academic degrees. The study found a positive relationship between continuing education activities and experiences; those CUNY librarians who recognised the need for such participation and viewed it positively also tended to be more actively involved. The variables of sex, job, security, type of college and additional degrees had no significant relationship to the attitude toward continuing education.

The areas most frequently and forcefully identified as requiring greatest attention in Neal's study were automation, non-book materials, systems design and analysis and database operations. Neal concluded that:

> The librarians at CUNY viewed continuing education as a source of more effective job performance, challenge, creativity, and satisfaction. However, practical concerns, particularly the inability to budget sufficient funds and time, frequently made involvement difficult. (34).

Weingard(35) documents a series of workshops during which the CLENE Learning Contract document was field tested at various sites in the State of Wisconsin in the United States. Data was gathered from four different groups: professional librarians with masters degrees; librarians with professional-level responsibilities, but without the MLS; para-professionals; and a group of library school students. While differences were found within and between groups, areas of perceived competence were in the interpersonal area, interacting with peers and clients. Areas that appeared repeatedly as in need of improvement included marketing techniques and 'keeping current' - particularly in technological developments and reference sources, the planning process, and monitoring current legislation and societal/newsworthy trends.

A considerable number of other projects which include needs assessments have been undertaken in the United States as part of statewide cooperative initiatives. However these are seen as tangential to the Melbourne study of special librarians and information centre managers.

Two Canadian continuing education needs studies were undertaken in 1980: one by the University of British Columbia (UBC) and the second by the Faculty of Library Science at the University of Alberta.

In the UBC study by Bewley(36) each Canadian School of Library in Information Studies was contacted and asked to respond to questions concerning the school's role in the planning, administration and conduct of continuing education programs. Bewley reported that all schools are involved to some degree in continuing education. However, CE is not a high priority. Only one school had a faculty member whose role and primary responsibility was to ensure that the school had a CE program.

In the same article, Bewley discussed the results of a limited study of those on the UBC continuing education mailing list. From responses to a questionnaire, Bewley concluded that librarians in British Columbia are 'primarily, almost desperately anxious to have their understanding of communications technology and skill in electronic data handling updated and improved. They are deeply concerned about the quality of management of their libraries. Increased competence in personnel handling, administration and politics (institutional and governmental) were emphasised'(37).

Bewley further reported that more than half the respondents had attended one or more CE workshops offered by the school. Of that number, 70% had their registration fees paid by their library or institution and 40% reported that they had paid all their own living and travel expenses. However, these figures need to be treated with some caution, as only 23% of participants returned usable questionnaires.

Henderson's study(38), undertaken for the University of Alberta, used a mailed questionnaire to reach the greatest possible number of professionals and para-professionals employed in libraries covered by the 'prairies'. Henderson reported that the demand for credit courses was substantially less than for shorter, non-credit courses. The responses to questions seeking precise subject needs, either for credit or in workshop segments, was remarkably uniform: management and administration in all its aspects, and the many facets of automation were well ahead of other areas. (Henderson comments, however that when courses in these areas were offered, there were insufficient registrants for the courses to proceed). Constraints to participation in continuing education courses included problems of distance, with the researcher reporting problems of jurisdictional consideration and administrative problems with those at a distance from Edmonton. Time and financial considerations were not viewed as major constraints.

Attitudes towards continuing education of members of staff from seven university and polytechnic libraries in England were explored by Konn and Roberts(39) from June to August, 1983. In this study, the words 'continuing education' appear to be close in concept to the term 'continuing professional development' used in the Broadbent and Grosser study. Data was gathered by means of structured interview with 34 academic librarians in a variety of positions.

Results of the interviews revealed significant differences of attitude, according to level of management, towards responsibility for, and methods of, continuing education. Senior managers regarded individuals as being ultimately responsible for their own professional development. However, almost all respondents at junior levels were of the opinion that it was the library's responsibility to invest time and effort in establishing an 'organised' system of continuing education. All levels recognised the possible role of the Library Association.

Konn and Roberts further concluded:

> Almost the only motivation for undertaking continuing education activities at the lower levels was personal satisfaction, given that promotion prospects were remote.
>
> ....In principle, short courses were a favoured method of acquiring additional skills and professional knowledge. However, not many individuals from the lower levels had attended such courses, largely owing to the expense involved. The lower levels expressed much enthusiasm for in-house training programmes, whereas top management gave these low priority. Formal study was not popular at junior levels where it could, in fact, present fewer difficulties ... Only the highest level of management stressed the importance of reading the professional literature(40).

Perhaps the most disturbing finding reported by Konn and Roberts was that those operating at different levels were unaware of their differing expectations and attitudes.

2.5 Summary

Recent needs assessments in the area of continuing professional development for information specialists and librarians indicate a desire for activities which assist individuals to 'keep current', enhance understandings of technological developments and improve management and administrative skills.

The roles and responsibilities of individuals, employers, educational institutions and professional associations are unclear. However, there appears to be a positive link between attitudes towards continuing professional development and experiences of decision making and participation in continuing professional development activities.

There are a variety of routes by which information service professionals prefer to maintain and improve their professional understandings and competencies, including participation in formal activities, reading, visiting other institutions and activity in professional associations.

The Australian literature includes a number of research studies which focus on continuing professional development needs. However, none of the post 1980 studies examines in depth the sector which includes special library and information centre managers.

3. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

3.1 Aims and Methodology

As indicated in Section One, the aims of the study were to identify the continuing professional development activities, organisational support, needs and priorities of those working in special libraries and information centres. In the light of these aims and the resources available, it was decided that the most appropriate methodology was a survey which used a structured interview schedule as the main means of collecting data.

The focus group for the study became those 'in charge' of special libraries and information centres. By including only heads, it was anticipated that a significant percentage of the sample would have completed their formal education some years previously.

3.2 Formulation of the Interview Schedule

The first draft of the interview schedule was prepared by the researchers in February 1985. The schedule was arranged in four parts.

1. Part One: About Your Organisation - questions related to the nature of the organisation/workplace and the position of the information service manager within the organisation.

2. Part Two: About You - questions on formal educational and professional background.

3. Part Three: About Your Continuing Professional Development Activities - details of the individual's involvement in continuing professional development activities over the past two years, reasons for limited participation or non-participation.

4. Part Four: About Your Continuing Professional Development - perceived current and future needs for professional development, priorities of needs cited and prefered mode(s) of learning.

During March the schedule was pilot-tested on several information service professionals who were excluded from the final sample. In addition to this, students in the Research Methods class tested the schedule on each other and on colleagues employed at junior levels in special libraries and information centres. As a result of this process, several changes were made to the interview schedule.

A copy of the final version of the schedule is included as Appendix A.

3.3 Selection of the Sample

The sampling frame chosen was the 1984 edition of the Directory of special libraries in Australia(41). As indicated previously, the target group was those designated as being 'in charge' of Melbourne based special libraries or information centres. For the purposes of this study, that person had to be a full-time employee of the organisation, though not necessarily spending all of his or her time on library and information centre duties. Those who were designated as being 'in charge' but whose terms of employment were part-time, honorary or a job-sharing arrangement were excluded.

A preliminary examination of the Victorian section of the Directory, omitting organisations which failed to satisfy the above criteria, yielded 217 eligible entries. Given available time and resources, it was possible to interview half this number. So, starting with 'No. 2', every second entry was selected. This yielded a total of 108 sites in the initial sample.

After these organisations were contacted, another 13 were excluded from the sample, due to failure to satisfy the criteria outlined above: six reported that there was no employee currently occupying the position of Librarian/Information Centre Manager; in the other seven cases, the position was occupied by a part-timer, or by more than one person in a job-sharing arrangement.

3.4 Response Rate

Of the 95 sites in the final sample, ten declined to participate, for various reasons, e.g. 'Too busy'; 'Library unsuitable for inclusion'; 'Library is in the process of moving'. With 85 out of 95 participating, the response rate was 89.5%. This was very pleasing. A mailed questionnaire would almost certainly have yielded a considerably lower response rate.

3.5 The Interviews

Early in April, letters requesting participation were mailed to organisations in the sample. A copy of the letter is included as Appendix B. A follow-up phone call, to enlist co-operation and to arrange a mutually convenient appointment time, was made in mid-April by staff and students who were to conduct the interviews. Most interviewers were allocated three sites each. Interviews were held over the ensuing three weeks, into early May.

Prior to conducting the interviews, students were briefed on the administration of the interview schedule and likely problem areas, and trained in interviewing techniques. These interviews were undertaken to minimise misunderstandings and to ensure a uniformity of interpretation of particular questions across interviewers. Each student rehearsed the interview with 'practice subjects'.

Most questions on the interview schedule required fixed responses, which the interviewer recorded by circling or ticking the relevant number on the schedule. Where a complex set of alternatives was given, interviewers handed the respondent a spare copy of the schedule, to assist in the selection of the chosen alternative. For the few questions in free-response format, participants' responses were recorded verbatim.

It was anticipated that each interview would take about half an hour. For the majority of cases, this proved to be an accurate estimate. A few interviews, under severe time pressures, took less than one half hour. In other cases, interviewers spent up to three hours with the respondent, who seemed to welcome the opportunity to share ideas and experiences with another person.

Generally, interviews ran smoothly, and elicited the necessary information. Relatively few difficulties were encountered. The few problems reported concerned mainly varying interpretations of some questions; uncertainity about meanings implied in terms used (e.g. 'professional development'), and a lack of time to complete adequately the rather lengthy interview schedule.

With any interview process utilising a large number of interviewers, some interviewer bias and inconsistency is inevitable. The primarily fixed response format adopted was a deliberate attempt to alleviate these problems.

3.6 Coding the Data

The interview schedule was designed to facilitate coding for data analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

After completing each interview, students were asked to code responses for each question in the box(es) provided. Numbers inserted corresponded to the alternative ticked/circled during the interview. Zero (0) was used to code a 'No response', and Nine (9) a 'Not applicable' response, throughout the schedule. Four questions were coded after the interviews were completed and data collected:

Q.4 What is the title of your present position?

Q.22 List of membership of other professional associations

Q.27 Nature of inhouse training sessions

Q.23 and 24 of the last section (identifying particular needs) 'other areas'.

Having finalised coding on the schedule, interviewers transferred the data to punched cards, ready for input and storage on the RMIT Cyber. After punching, cards were checked by another student against the original schedule. Any errors detected were corrected. Punched cards and interview schedules were then both filed in Case Number order. Once the data file was complete, the researchers checked further for possible coding errors against the interview schedule, and, in a few instances, with the relevant interviewer. Any necessary corrections were made. It was felt that this checking process, though time-consuming, was both necessary and worthwhile to minimise errors and inconsistencies with the large number of interviewers involved.

3.7 Analysis of the Data

An SPSS program was written to access and manipulate the data-file. The 'frequencies' sub-program was used to generate frequency tables for each variable, and the 'Crosstabs' sub-program to compile tables of cross-tabulations for selected variables.

Analysing frequencies data proved to be the most fruitful means of data analysis. Relatively few cross-tabulation tables yielded results that were statistically significant, according to the Chi-square test, though some interesting links can be identified on the basis of the raw numbers and percentages.

Section Four reports the results of the investigation, while Section Five discusses the results and their implications.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Reporting of the results

The results have been aggregated into six main areas: organisational profile, the participant's position in the organisation, organisational support, educational and professional background, recent continuing professional development activity and perceived needs for continuing professional development.

In the tables which follow, the rounding of numbers has meant that some percentages do not total 100% exactly. Adjusted frequency percentages rather than relative frequency percentages have been used, thus excluding those in the 'missing users' category (e.g. those giving a nil response or those for whom the question was not applicable).

4.2 Organisational profile

Some background information was sought from participants concerning the nature, type and size of organisations in which they worked. This data was necessary to glean a picture of the employing bodies and to enable the analysis of any differences between needs and organisational factors. Half of the organisations participating in the study were State or Commonwealth government departments or statutory authorities. Of the 85 chiefs of special libraries and information centres interviewed, approximately one quarter came from State government departments and authorities (23.5%), another quarter from Commonwealth departments and authorities (25.8%), and the third quarter from for-profit companies (23.5%). The remaining 23 individuals were from non-profit organisations (11.8%) and educational institutions (15.3%).

Table 1 Type of organisation

	%
State government department	17.6
State government statutory authority	5.9
Commonwealth government department	12.9
Commonwealth statutory authority	12.9
For profit company	23.5
Non-profit organisation	11.8
Educational institution	15.3
TOTAL	100.0

N=85

Most participants in the survey came from large organisations. Almost 80% were from organisations which employed over 100 people. Over two-thirds indicated that their client group was over 250 people.

Table 2 Number employed

	%
Less than 5	0.0
5-10	1.2
21-100	20.0
101-250	10.6
Over 250	68.2
TOTAL	100.0

N=85

Responses to question three concerning field of specialisation of the organisation (Table 3) indicate that more organisations were involved with scientific and technological concerns than with the social sciences and humanities. A relatively large number (22.4%) were outside the range of options specified.

Table 3 Field of specialisation

	%
Engineering, Architecture	14.1
Law	5.9
Education, Social policy	7.1
Australiana, Arts, History	1.2
Health, Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing	14.1
Business, Finance, Administration, Management	10.6
Science, Agriculture, Environment, Mining	24.7
Other	22.4
Total	100.0

N=85

4.3 Participant's position in the organisation

The interview schedule contained a cluster of questions (Questions 4, 5, 6, 8 and 11) aimed at giving some indicators of the participant's position and responsibilities within the organisation.

A brief review of the titles given to chiefs of special libraries and information centres over several editions of the Directory of special libraries in Australia seemed to indicate that there had been a shift in some areas: either the Directory had widened its scope to include a wider range of agencies or the titles of some positions had changed (or possibly both of these). It was thought too, that a question soliciting the title of the chief's position could shed some light on the nature of the position and the context in which it was viewed.

The overwhelming majority of participants (90.6%) reported that the word 'Librarian' or 'Library' was in their position title, e.g. 'Librarian'; 'Chief Librarian'; 'Librarian in charge'; 'Senior librarian'; 'Acting librarian'; 'Superintendent of library services'; 'Branch librarian'; 'Library officer'; 'Law librarian'; 'Medical librarian'. Five (5.9%) of the position titles contained the word 'Information' rather than 'Library/Librarian', e.g. 'Information officer'; 'Controller, information services'; 'Information manager'. Three position titles (3.5%) contained neither of the words 'Library/Librarian' nor 'Information', e.g. 'Technical officer'; 'Curator of Music'.

Special library and information centre heads seem to be a fairly mobile group, or perhaps there has been some growth or changes in this sector of the workforce. The majority of respondents were relatively new appointees to their current positions, with 50.6% in their positions for three years or less, and 70.6% for six years or less. 16.5% had been in their current jobs for over ten years.

Table 4 Years in position

	%
Less than 1 year	10.6
1-3 years	40.0
4-6 years	20.0
7-10 years	12.9
11-20 years	11.8
Over 20 years	4.7
TOTAL	100.0

N=85

Question 6 concerning level of responsibility within the organisation was perhaps the most difficult question to phrase. Participants were asked to indicate their level of formal responsibility within the organisation's structure on a scale from 1 (lower) to 5 (upper). The purpose of this question was to identify any differences between current and perceived continuing professional development needs between senior and more junior 'chiefs'.

While the subjectivity of responses to this question must be kept in mind it is interesting to note in Table 5 that 47.1% regard their formal level of responsibility in the organisation to be at a middle level, 24.7% to be upper middle and 9.4% indicated a senior level of responsibility within the organisation.

Table 5 Formal level of responsibility within the organisation's structure

	%
Category 1 (Lower level)	1.2
Category 2 (Lower middle level)	17.6
Category 3 (Middle level)	47.1
Category 4 (Upper middle level)	24.7
Category 5 (Upper level)	9.4
TOTAL	100.0

N=85

It was thought too that there might be some differences in continuing education needs and activity between those who supervised larger and smaller numbers of staff.

The overwhelming majority of information professionals surveyed (72, or 84.7%) supervised one or more staff (see Table 6). Only 13 (15.3%) said they did not supervise staff.

The relatively small size of the libraries/information centres is evidenced by the fact that only 14.1% of those who responded to the question supervised 7 or more staff. 58.8% supervised 1-3 staff, and 11.8% 4-6 staff.

Table 6 Number of staff supervised

		%
0		15.3
1-3		58.8
4-6		11.8
7-10		5.9
11-20		4.7
Over 20		3.5
	TOTAL	100.0

N=85

While the question of level of responsibility was perhaps the most difficult question to phrase, the one concerning salary was thought to be the most difficult to ask.

To elicit further information on the level and status of the position within the organisation, respondents were asked to indicate the range into which their salaries fell (Table 7). Given the sensitive nature of such a question, participants were given the option of not responding. This option was taken by eleven people. Of the remaining 74, 25.7% were at the lower end of the scale with salaries of less than $20,000. 55.4% had salaries of less than $26,000, and 89.2% less than $34,000. Only eight respondents (10.8%) received salaries of over $34,000.

Table 7 Salary range

	%
Less than $15,000	0
$15,000-$20,000	25.7
$20,001-$26,000	29.7
$26,001-$34,000	33.8
Over $34,000	10.8
TOTAL	100.0

N=74

Missing cases = 11

Some of these background factors should be kept in mind when looking at the nature and level of organisational support for professional development, current level of participation in continuing education activities and present and future continuing professional development needs.

In order to see if there were any definite correlations between nature of organisation, salary level and the participant's positions in the organisation, a number of cross tabulations were undertaken. While the numbers involved are too small for valid statistical tests, the raw data does not indicate any particular patterns or correlations.

4.4 Organisational support

The level of organisational support, as expressed in financial support, was the subject of questions 9 and 10.

While most of the organisations surveyed did support continuing professional development activities financially (only 18.1% of respondents claimed they had no such support), the extent of this assistance was generally limited (see Table 8). In the past two years, support amounted to less than $600 in 62.7% of cases, and less than $1,000 for 78.4%. A small, but significant minority of organisations had made a considerable investment in the development of staff: 20.4% claimed their organisations had spent between $1,000 and $4,000 in the two year period. One person (1.2%) reported an expenditure in excess of $4,000.

Table 8 Organisational expenditure for the past two years on the participant's continuing professional development

	%
Nil	18.1
$1-$199	15.7
$200-$599	28.9
$600-$999	15.7
$1,000-$1,999	9.6
$2,000-$3,999	10.8
$4,000 and over	1.2
TOTAL	100.0

N=83

Missing cases = 2

To determine the primary source of funding for professional development activities, participants were asked to estimate the approximate percentages of costs which had been borne by their organisations, by themselves personally, and by [unspecified] others. Results show an overwhelming reliance on organisational support, with relatively little personal financial input; and a negligible contribution from 'others'.

52.6% of organisations funded professional development activities almost entirely; and 67.1% funded more than half of staff expenses in this area. Thirteen organisations (17.1%) provided some limited input (1-50%) into the development of their staff. Only twelve (15.8%) of the 76 respondents to this question claimed they received no organisational support.

More than half of the participants (57.3%) stated that they had spent nothing themselves; 25.3% indicated that they had personally paid for up to 25% of their continuing professional development expenses and costs. A much smaller percentage (17.4%) indicated that they personally had paid between 26% and 100% of their continuing professional development expenses. It appears that of the amount spent on continuing professional development, organisations bear a considerable proportion of the costs. However, it could be argued that the funds spent are not as large as they could or should be for those working in such a dynamic area.

Table 9 Approximate percentages of costs for continuing professional development borne by the organisation, the participant and by others

% spent	By the organisation	By the participant	By others
	%	%	%
0%	15.8	57.3	95.5
1-25%	6.6	25.3	3.0
26-50%	10.5	8.0	1.5
51-75%	14.5	2.7	0.0
76-100%	52.6	6.7	0.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0
	N = 76	N = 75	N = 67
	Missing cases = 9	Missing cases = 10	Missing cases = 18

(Note: It is difficult to know whether the relatively high numbers of 'not applicable' responses to this question were attributable to a misunderstanding of the question, or to a failure to realise that a '0%' category was provided, with 'nil' responses being coded as 'not applicable' and hence included in the 'Missing cases' category).

Cross tabulations of the amount spent against salary levels indicated that those in lower salary ranges generally spent less on professional development activities than those in the higher ranges. Again, the data does not meet requirements for tests of significance as the numbers in cells are too small. However, the raw data (see Table 10) revealed that a greater percentage of those in the $15000 - $20000 salary range spent nothing on such activities than those in the higher salary levels:

Table 10 Salary level and amounts spent on continuing professional development activities

Salary level	Amount spent (combination of sources)				
	None	Up to $600	$600-$2000	Over $2000	TOTAL
$15000-$20000	31.6	52.7	15.8	0.0	100.0
$20001-$26000	23.8	61.9	9.6	4.8	100.0
$26001-$34000	12.5	33.4	37.5	16.7	100.0
Over $34000	12.5	12.5	50.0	25.0	100.0

4.5 Educational and professional backgrounds

The second major part of the interview schedule focussed on participants' educational and professional backgrounds. Questions 12 to 22 sought information on qualifications held, current study and membership of professional associations.

Of the 85 respondents, 73 (85.9%) indicated that they held tertiary qualifications; twelve (14.1%) said they did not. The highest qualifications of each of the respondents holding tertiary qualifications are listed in Table 11.

Table 11 Level of highest qualification

	%
TAFE Course (usually a Library Technician's Certificate)	8.2
Undergraduate Diploma	16.4
Undergraduate Degree	30.1
Postgraduate Diploma	37.0
Masters degree or higher	8.2
TOTAL	100.0

N=73

Missing cases = 12

All but 36.5% had completed this qualification within the past ten years. 21.6% had a completion date from 1975-1978; 25.7% from 1979-1981; and 16.2% from 1982-1984.

Sixteen (18.8%) of the 85 respondents were currently studying for a tertiary qualification. Some, but not all, of these, currently lacked tertiary qualifications -- six were studying for a postgraduate diploma or Masters degree (two and four respectively); three were enrolled in a TAFE Course (Library Technician's Certificate); two in undergraduate diploma courses; and five in undergraduate degree courses.

In question 16 participants were asked if they were eligible for Associate (Professional) membership of the LAA. Of the 84 respondents to this question, seventy (83.3%) were eligible for Associate membership of the LAA, and fourteen (16.7%) were not.

Of the seventy eligible for Associate membership, seventeen (24.3%) had qualified through LAA or Library Association (UK) Registration examinations; fifty (71.4%) through Australian courses -- both professional and library technicians' courses; and three (4.3%) through courses overseas.

The majority (60%) of those eligible for LAA Associate membership had qualified since 1975 (31.5% since 1980, and 28.5% from 1975-1979). 40% had qualified before 1975 (14.3% from 1970-1974, and 25.7% before 1970).

Half of those lacking librarianship qualifications (seven of the fourteen) were currently engaged in studies towards such a qualification. Thus it would seem that the overwhelming majority of chiefs of special libraries and information centres hold a professional qualification recognised by the LAA.

Of the 85 participants in the study 54 (63.5%) were currently LAA members. A relatively high percentage of those eligible for LAA Associate membership were not members. In some cases, this was attributed to the fact that the organisation had taken out institutional membership with the LAA, and the participant saw little value in holding separate personal membership. Given this data, however, the LAA has considerable scope for recruitment amongst these ranks.

When asked whether they were members of any other professional associations (excluding unions), thirty of the 85 respondents (37%) answered in the affirmative. Many of these held multiple memberships.

The single most popular association was the Victorian Association of Library Automation (VALA), with seven memberships, followed by the Library Technicians' Association, with four. One substantial category of membership was library-related special interest groups, e.g. Australian Law Librarians Group, ACCESS, Reference Interest Group, Art Librarians Group, Merchant Bank Library Group. A few were members of overseas library associations, e.g. the Library Association (UK), Danish Library Association, Special Libraries Association, American Association of Law Librarians, International Association of Music Librarians. Two were members of the Records Management Association of Australia. The Australian Society of Archivists, the Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand, the National Book Council, IMPICTA (Patents), Storytellers' Guild, and Victorian Bookbinders' Guild were each cited once.

Several held memberships of professional associations not directly related to libraries: ANZAAS, British Soiety of Rhiology, Royal Australian Chemical Institute, Victorian Allied Health Professionals Association, Women in Architecture, Soroptomist International. Graduates' associations of universities and colleges were mentioned by a few.

Thus some chiefs of special library and information centres are members of a number of professional associations while others claim that they do not belong to any at all. Membership of a professional association bringing benefits such as receipt of a journal, may be seen, in most circumstances, as a minimum indicator of commitment to continuing professional development.

4.6 Recent professional development activity

Part Three of the interview schedule sought information concerning the professional development activities of participants over the preceding two years.

Continuing professional development activities may take many shapes and forms. These include professional reading, self-directed study and visits to other library and information agencies. However, participation in seminars, conferences and workshops is usually seen as the major contribution to individual professional development.

In Questions 23 to 27 participants were asked about their recent attendance at workshops, conferences and seminars, inhouse training sessions and the constraints to their involvement in these types of activities.

Sixty-five participants (76.5%) had attended a workshop, conference or seminar (other than inhouse ones) in the last two years, while the remaining 20 (23.5%) had not.

Of those who had attended courses, most had multiple attendances, as demonstrated in Table 12.

Table 12 Number of continuing education courses attended in the past two years

	%
1-2 courses	32.3
3-5 courses	44.6
6-10 courses	20.0
More than 10	3.1
TOTAL	100.0

N = 65 Missing cases = 20

Current LAA membership was matched with attendance at continuing education courses. Those who were currently LAA members appeared to be overrepresented amongst those who had participated in workshops, conferences or seminars over the past two years. However these differences were not statistically significant (see Table 13).

Table 13 LAA membership and continuing education attendance

	Attendance	Non-attendance	TOTAL	
	%	%	%	
LAA member	77.8	22.2	100.0	(N = 54)
Non-member	64.5	35.5	100.0	(N = 31)

Attendance at continuing education courses was also checked against salary levels to indicate if there were any link between these two variables. In fact the earlier data presented in Table 10 was strengthened by this data: those on salaries above $20000 were found to have participated in continuing education courses to a greater extent than those on annual salaries under $20000.

Table 14 Salary level and continuing education attendance

Salary ranges	Yes %	No %	TOTAL %
$15000-$20000	47.4	52.6	100.0
$20001-$26000	77.3	22.7	100.0
$26001-$34000	76.0	24.0	100.0
Over $34000	75.0	25.0	100.0

It may be that those on lower salaries find it more difficult to gain permission, funds or time release to afford seminars, workshops and conferences; on the other hand it may be that those in higher paid positions value these experiences more than those on lower salaries and so may be prepared to be more assertive in attempts to gain time release and funding.

4.7 Constraints on professional development

Some people find it difficult to participate in activities such as seminars and conferences for a variety of reasons. Paticipants in this study were asked to rate each of seven factors as 'major constraint', 'minor constraint' or 'no constraint'. The seven factors were: lack of time outside work, no time release from work, payment of fees or expenses, lack of suitable course, lack of motivation or no perceived need, unsuitable venues or locations, and duration (too long).

Only two factors emerged as significant constraints on course attendance. These were lack of time outside work to attend

courses, and the perceived lack of suitable or relevant courses. The former was a constraint experienced to some extent by 76.5% of the sample, and considered a major constraint by 31.8%; while the latter was cited as a reason for non-attendance by 69.4% of the sample, and regarded as a major constraint by 37.6%.

Moderate sources of constraint on course attendance were:

- financial concerns (payment of fees and expenses): a major constraint for 15.7% of respondents, and a minor one for 39.8%.

- unsuitable venues: a major constraint for 14.5%, and a minor one for 37.3%.

- course duration too long: a major constraint for 10.8%, and a minor one for 36.1%.

Lack of motivation, or no perceived need, and no time release from work were negligible sources of constraint on course attendance for most of the sample. But perhaps some further comment is called for on lack of time release. Most respondents claimed that employers willingly gave time release to attend continuing education courses. However, work pressures were such that many felt they could not afford the time to leave the job to attend such courses, that they could attend only in their own time. This throws further light on 'Lack of time outside work' -- the factor identified as the major constraint on course attendance.

Table 15 Constraints on course attendance

Reason for nonattendance	Major Constraint	Minor Constraint	No Constraint	Total		Missing Cases
	%	%	%	%	No	No
Lack of time outside work	31.8	44.7	23.5	100.0	85	0
No time release from work	9.8	31.7	58.5	100.0	82	3
Payment of fees/ expenses	15.7	39.8	44.6	100.0	83	2
Lack of suitable courses	37.6	31.8	30.6	100.0	85	0
Lack of motiv-ation, or no perceived need	12.0	26.5	61.4	100.0	83	2
Unsuitable venue/location	14.5	37.3	48.2	100.0	83	2
Course duration too long	10.8	36.1	53.0	100.0	83	2

4.8 Sponsoring organisations for continuing education activities

Participants were asked to indicate sponsoring organisations for the continuing education activities they had attended. Sixty-three (74.1%) of respondents provided this data. Due to multiple attendances, 124 references were made to sponsoring organisations. Of these, the LAA was the single largest continuing education provider, with 37 citations (29.8%). Other library-related professional bodies and interest groups, (e.g. AACOBS, interest groups of art librarians, law librarians, business librarians, medical librarians, transport librarians, TAFE librarians) accounted for 13 citations (10.5%); and larger libraries such as the National Library of Australia and State Library of Victoria for seven (5.6%). After the LAA, computer-related organisations and professional bodies such as ACI, DIALOG, ORBIT, IBM, VALA (Victorian Association for Library Automation) and CAVAL were the next largest continuing education sponsors, with 32 mentions (25.8%). Commercial organisations such as Chemical Abstracts and Pergamon accounted for three citations (2.4%). Educational institutions such as Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Footscray Institute of Technology and Prahran TAFE rated 14 mentions (11.3%). Government departments or statutory authorities (e.g. Defence Department, Patents Office, Supreme Court Library, Australian Road Research Board) accounted for eight (6.5%), and non-library professional bodies (e.g. Australian Institute of Management, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, Teachers Federation of Victoria), for ten (8.1%).

4.9 Inhouse training sessions

Seventeen of the 85 respondents indicated that their organisations did not offer inhouse training sessions. Of the remaining 68 respondents in organisations that did provide such sessions, 42 (61.8%) had attended such courses over the past two years, while 26 (38.2%) had not.

Between them, the 42 respondents had attended 66 inhouse training sessions. Management skills and technological awareness courses were the most prevalent with management related courses accounting for 46.9% of inhouse courses, and computer courses 18.2%.

With the management related courses twelve (18.2%) focussed on general managerial and supervisory skills, five (7.6%) on financial management, three (4.5%) on personnel management/staff relations, and seven (10.6%) on enhancing communication skills, counselling, negotiation skills, or assertiveness training. Time management and stress management were each mentioned once (3%) and report writing twice (3%).

With the introduction of new technology, organisations ran automation familiarisation courses on, for example, the WANG, VAX and LOTUS systems, and ABN training. Twelve (18.2%) such sessions were cited.

Four of the 66 courses listed (6.1%) focussed on areas such as Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO), sexism and women in management.

A few of the larger special libraries ran courses for their library staffs on, e.g., collection development; basic library skills (acquisitions, cataloguing, inter-library loans, etc.); use of audiovisual resources; resource loss management and materials conservation. Nine of the inhouse sessions cited, or 13.6%, fell into this category.

4.10 Formal study

Undertaking a course which leads to a formal qualification such as a degree or diploma is one means of fulfilling a perceived learning need, and enhancing professional development. Respondents were asked if they were interested in pursuing a formal course of study, and, if so, in what area(s).

Fifty-three (62.4%) of the 85 respondents showed some interest in undertaking further formal qualifications. Some listed more than one area -- to give a total of 68 preferred areas. Responses clustered around four main fields:

1. Management/Business, was cited twenty-one times (30.9% of the 68 areas). Eight people specified a Masters level qualification such as an MBA; three, a Business Studies course, and two a course in personnel management; the rest indicated a 'management course'.

2. Computers/Automation/Technology, was mentioned by fifteen participants (22.1% of the 68 areas).

3. Librarianship and related areas, were mentioned fourteen times (20.6% Of the 68 areas). Nine of these obviously still desired basic librarianship qualifications -- a degree or diploma in librarianship. Four were interested in studying for a Masters of Librarianship, and one for an Archives qualification.

4. Specific disciplines were mentioned fifteen times (22.1% of the 68 areas). In many cases, these were related to the specialty of the employing organisation, e.g. law, administrative law, adult education, fine arts, industrial relations, politics and government. Six wished to undertake or complete degrees in Arts or Social Sciences.

Unspecified Masters qualifications were mentioned by three respondents (4.4%). This spread of interests and the emphasis on management and technology has implications for the development of post-basic courses to meet the needs of those working in special libraries and information centres.

4.11 Perceived needs for continuing professional development

If the sample group perceived a 'lack of suitable continuing education courses' as a major constraint as reported earlier, in what areas did they perceive a need? One of the major purposes of this research project was to identify specific areas of need for continuing and further education providers.

Participants were asked their views on two different aspects of professional development needs: firstly areas of need related to their present jobs, and, secondly, those that they felt were important to their own professional development, especially in the future. It was acknowledged that there would or could be some overlap in the 'present' and 'future' areas. 'Need' was defined as 'a discrepancy between your current level of performance and your desired level of performance'.

In the interview schedule, 22 specific areas were listed. These were arranged in three clusters: management skills, technical knowledge and skills and client service knowledge and skills. A four point ranking scale was used: 'high' level of need, 'medium' level of need, 'low' level of need and 'no need'.

Data solicited in this part of the study can be aggregated in a number of different ways: for example, totalling the raw rankings, collapsing say 'high' and 'medium' need, weighting each of these.

Table 16 lists the 'present' and 'future' raw data for each area by level of need.

Four areas of need for present positions were rated as 'high' by over 35% of participants. These areas are:

Applications of microcomputers (41.2%)

Searching electronic sources of information (40%)

Sources of information in particular subject areas (37.1%)

Selecting and maintaining automated systems (35.3%)

Area no. 8 ('Sources of information in particular subject areas') involved participants nominating such areas. Sixty respondents answered this question, with 77 citations in all. The most significant area cited was that dealing with the 'new technology' -- library applications of computers, database management, and the like. This accounted for 32 of the 77 references (41.6%). This reinforces the heavy 'technology' emphasis in present areas of need.

The majority of other citations given in response to area no. 8 were to subject areas related to the organisation's field of expertise, e.g. biochemistry, building, engineering, geology, horticulture, medicine, shipping, water resources. Twenty such subjects were nominated -- there were 31 mentions

of these subjects (40.3% of cases). Six references (7.8%) were made to material by format -- archives, government publications, and current statistical data. The remaining eight citations (10.4%) were to library and management related topics and skills, covered elsewhere in the list, e.g. acquisitions, financial management, supervision and communications skills.

Based on the raw data, the most important areas of future need are:

Application of microcomputers (50.6%)

Selecting and maintaining automated systems (47.1%)

Searching electronic sources of information (47.1%)

Database design and development (38.1%)

Sources of information in particular subject areas (38%)

Table 16. Perceived needs for continuing professional development

Area	PRESENT NEED: High level of need %	Medium level of need %	Low level of need %	No need %	Total %	Total No.	Missing cases	FUTURE NEED: High level of need %	Medium level of need %	Low level of need %	No need %	Total %	Total No.	Missing cases
A. MANAGEMENT SKILLS														
1. Financial management	15.3	25.9	31.8	27.1	100.0	85	0	25.9	37.6	15.3	21.2	100.0	85	0
2. Staff relations	16.5	31.8	36.5	15.3	100.0	85	0	28.2	43.5	17.6	10.6	100.0	85	0
3. Time management	27.1	32.9	30.6	9.4	100.0	85	0	28.2	29.4	28.2	14.1	100.0	85	0
4. Problem solving skills	14.3	40.5	33.3	11.9	100.0	84	1	21.4	44.0	20.2	14.3	100.0	84	1
5. Planning skills	22.4	40.0	27.1	10.6	100.0	85	0	31.8	38.8	18.8	10.6	100.0	85	0
6. Organisational communication skills	15.3	37.6	34.1	12.9	100.0	85	0	23.5	36.5	28.2	11.8	100.0	85	0
7. Meeting skills	20.0	31.8	32.9	15.3	100.0	85	0	23.8	33.3	27.4	15.5	100.0	84	1
B. TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS														
8. Sources of information in particular subject areas	37.1	32.9	20.0	10.0	100.0	70	15	38.0	31.0	18.3	12.7	100.0	71	14
9. Selecting & acquiring resources for a service/collection	17.6	23.5	40.0	18.8	100.0	85	0	15.3	31.8	34.1	18.8	100.0	85	0
10. Searching electronic sources of information (databases, online searching, etc.)	40.0	22.4	20.0	17.6	100.0	85	0	47.1	24.7	17.6	10.6	100.0	85	0
11. Cataloguing using AACR2	8.2	10.6	40.0	41.2	100.0	85	0	11.8	14.1	35.3	38.8	100.0	85	0
12. Indexing	14.1	23.5	36.5	25.9	100.0	85	0	14.1	27.1	40.0	18.8	100.0	85	0
13. Selection & use of thesauri/subject headings lists	18.8	20.0	34.1	27.1	100.0	85	0	23.5	27.1	31.8	17.6	100.0	85	0

Area	PRESENT NEED: High level of need %	Medium level of need %	Low level of need %	No need %	Total %	Total No.	Missing cases	FUTURE NEED: High level of need %	Medium level of need %	Low level of need %	No need %	Total %	Total No.	Missing cases
14. Constructing thesauri	17.9	13.1	34.5	34.5	100.0	84	1	14.3	25.0	31.0	29.8	100.0	84	1
15. Choice & use of classification schemes	9.4	12.9	28.2	49.4	100.0	85	0	10.6	21.2	29.4	38.8	100.0	85	0
16. Database design & development	27.1	28.2	24.7	20.0	100.0	85	0	38.1	31.0	16.7	14.3	100.0	84	1
17. Selecting & maintaining automated systems	35.3	28.2	21.2	15.3	100.0	85	0	47.1	28.2	15.3	9.4	100.0	85	0
18. Using ABN	18.8	22.4	32.9	25.9	100.0	85	0	27.1	25.9	22.4	24.7	100.0	85	0
19. Applications of microcomputers	41.2	24.7	15.3	18.8	100.0	85	0	50.6	23.5	14.1	11.8	100.0	85	0
20. Use of AV resources & equipment	14.1	17.6	34.1	34.1	100.0	85	0	16.7	34.5	25.0	23.8	100.0	84	1
C. CLIENT SERVICE KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS														
21. Identifying client needs	24.7	27.1	32.9	15.3	100.0	85	0	33.3	26.2	27.4	13.1	100.0	84	1
22. Client communication skills	25.9	22.4	35.3	16.5	100.0	85	0	28.2	22.4	32.9	16.5	100.0	85	0

[23.] "Other needs not included" identified by respondents

Thirteen respondents suggested other needs -- eighteen needs in all: Public relations and library promotion (3); Preparing reports and submissions (3); Staff training and development (2); Negotiation skills (2); Space planning (1); Reader education (1); Public speaking (1); Inter-library loans, cooperation and networks (1); Special subject-related needs (4).

To further reduce the data presented in the complex Table 16, percentages for 'High' and 'Medium' levels of need were merged to the new category of 'Significant level of need'. The 'Low' level of need and 'No need' were similarly merged into the category of 'Minimal' need. Table 17 reports perceived needs in a condensed format.

Table 17. Perceived needs -- Condensed format

	PRESENT NEED		FUTURE NEED	
	Significant level of need %	Minimal level of need %	Significant level of need %	Minimal level of need %
1. Financial management	41.2	58.9	63.5	36.5
2. Staff relations	48.3	51.7	71.7	28.2
3. Time management	60.0	40.0	57.6	42.3
4. Problem solving skills	54.8	45.2	65.4	34.5
5. Planning skills	62.4	37.7	70.6	29.4
6. Organisational communication skills	52.9	47.0	60.0	40.0
7. Meeting skills	51.8	48.2	57.1	42.9
8. Sources of information in particular subject areas	70.0	30.0	69.0	31.0
9. Selection/ acquisition	41.1	58.8	47.1	52.9
10. Searching electronic sources of information	62.4	37.6	71.8	28.2
11. Cataloguing using AACR2	18.8	81.2	25.9	74.1
12. Indexing	37.6	62.4	41.2	58.8
13. Selection & use of thesauri/ subject headings lists	38.8	61.2	50.6	49.4
14. Constructing thesauri	31.0	69.0	39.3	60.8
15. Choice & use of classification schemes	22.3	77.6	31.8	68.2

	Significant level of need %	Minimal level of need %	Significant level of need %	Minimal level of need %
16. Database design & development	55.3	44.7	69.1	31.0
17. Selecting & maintaining automated systems	63.5	36.5	75.3	24.7
18. Using ABN	41.2	58.8	53.0	47.1
19. Microcomputer applications	65.9	34.1	74.1	25.9
20. Use of AV resources & equipment	31.7	68.2	51.2	48.8
21. Identifying client needs	51.8	48.2	59.5	40.5
22. Client communication skills	48.3	51.8	50.6	49.4

An examination of the merged data reveals the rankings for 'present' areas of need (see Table 18). Figures given after each ranking are the combined percentages of respondents indicating a high or medium level of need.

Table 18: Summary rankings - Present needs

Sources of information in particular subject areas (70%)
Applications of microcomputers (65.9%)
Selecting and maintaining automated systems (63.5%)
Searching electronic sources of information (62.4%)
Planning skills (62.4%)
Time management (60%)
Database design and development (55.3%)
Problem solving skills (54.8%)
Organisational communication skills (52.9%)
Meeting skills (51.8%)
Identifying client needs (51.8%)
Client communication skills (including reference interviewing techniques) (48.3%)
Staff relations (48.3%)
Financial management (41.2%)
Using ABN (41.2%)
Selection/Acquisitions (41.1%)
Selection and use of thesauri and subject headings lists (38.8%)
Indexing (37.6%)
Use of AV resources and equipment (31.7%)
Constructing thesauri (31%)
Choice and use of classification schemes (22.3%)
Cataloguing using AACR2 (18.8%)

For areas of 'future' need the combined percentages reveal the following rankings:

Table 19: Summary ranking -- Future needs

Selecting and maintaining automated systems (75.3%)
Applications of microcomputers (74.1%)
Searching electronic sources of information (71.8%)
Staff relations (71.7%)
Planning skills (70.6%)
Database design and development (69.1%)
Sources of information in particular subject areas (69%)
Problem solving skills (65.4%)
Financial management (63.5%)
Organisational communication skills (60%)
Identifying client needs (59.5%)
Time management (57.6%)
Meeting skills (57.1%)
Using ABN (53%)
Use of AV resources and equipment (51.2%)
Selection and use of thesauri and lists of subject headings (50.6%)
Client communication skills (including reference interviewing techniques (50.6%)
Selection/Acquisitions (47.1%)

Indexing (41.2%)
Constructing thesauri (39.3%)
Choice and use of classification schemes (22.3%)
Cataloguing using AACR2 (25.9%)

While in Tables 16 to 19 the highest perceived need is for improved knowledge, understanding and skills in the technology oriented areas, it is interesting to note also the importance placed on particular management skills. The summary rankings would indicate higher needs in this area than the raw percentages.

There are also shifts which are evident in the perceived needs for particular management skills when 'present' and 'future' needs are compared: amongst the more clearly identifiable 'management skills' planning and time management skills are the highest ranked in 'present' needs, while 'staff relations' and 'planning skills' are ranked the highest in 'future' areas of need. (It appears that 'time management' skills either are no longer required in the future or are to be effectively acquired in the near future!)

Thus those areas aimed at utilising technological development were seen as high areas of need for both the present and the future. Future needs included more emphasis on some management skills than the present needs.

4.12 Priorities of perceived needs

Having indicated for each of the 22 areas listed, the relative level of need for continuing professional development, participants were then asked to identify three priority areas of need for both their present position, and for their future development. Results are detailed in Table 20.

Table 20 Priority needs --- 'To assist in present position'

	First Priority Area %	Second Priority Area %	Third Priority Area %	Total of Priorities 1-3 Averaged %
Financial management	6.0	2.4	2.5	3.6
Staff relations	6.0	4.8	6.2	5.6
Time management	4.8	3.6	4.9	4.4
Problem solving skills	2.4	2.4	0.0	1.6
Planning skills	4.8	6.0	9.9	6.9
Organisational communication skills	1.2	4.8	6.2	4.1
Meeting skills	0.0	1.2	1.2	0.8
Sources of information in particular subject areas	4.8	3.6	3.7	4.0
Selection/Acquisitions	3.6	2.4	3.7	3.2
Searching electronic sources of information	14.3	16.7	11.1	14.0
Cataloguing using AACR2	0.0	1.2	1.2	0.8
Indexing	2.4	1.2	0.0	1.2
Selection and use of thesauri/subject headings lists	1.2	1.2	0.0	0.8
Constructing thesauri	1.2	2.4	1.2	1.6
Choice and use of classification schemes	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.4
Database design and development	6.0	11.9	7.4	8.4
Selecting & maintaining automated systems	15.5	15.5	4.9	12.0
Using ABN	0.0	4.8	3.7	2.8
Applications of microcomputers	10.7	6.0	19.8	12.2
Use of AV resources and equipment	1.2	0.0	2.5	1.2
Identifying client needs	7.1	3.6	4.9	5.2
Client communication skills	4.8	3.6	4.9	4.4
Other areas specified by respondents	1.2	1.2	0.0	0.8
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	N = 84 Missing cases = 1	N = 84 Missing cases = 1	N = 81 Missing cases = 4	N = 83 Missing cases = 2

Again, those areas with a technology emphasis were seen as high priorities. When the three priorities were totalled, the following areas were seen as the highest priorities of 'present' need:

Searching electronic sources of information

Application of microcomputers

Selecting and maintaining automated systems

Planning skills

Table 21 lists priority needs to assist in future development.

Looking at first priorities only, areas seen as having a high priority for participants' future needs were, firstly, 'selecting and maintaining automated systems', secondly, 'searching electronic sources of information' and thirdly, 'financial management'. Other strong future needs identified included 'database design and development', 'planning skills', 'application of microcomputers' and 'organisational communication skills'.

Table 21 Priority needs -- 'To assist future development'

	First Priority Area %	Second Priority Area %	Third Priority Area %	Total of Priorities 1-3 Averaged %
Financial management	8.4	1.2	3.8	4.5
Staff relations	6.0	4.9	2.5	4.5
Time management	2.4	1.2	2.5	2.0
Problem solving skills	3.6	4.9	0.0	2.8
Planning skills	2.4	9.8	12.7	8.3
Organisational communication skills	6.0	3.7	10.1	6.6
Meeting skills	1.2	4.9	1.3	2.5
Sources of information in particular subject areas	6.0	4.9	1.3	4.1
Selection/Acquisitions	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.7
Searching electronic sources of information	13.3	12.2	7.6	11.0
Cataloguing using AACR2	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.4
Indexing	4.8	1.2	0.0	2.0
Selection and use of thesauri/subject headings lists	1.2	1.2	0.0	0.8
Constructing thesauri	1.2	3.7	0.0	1.6
Choice and use of classification schemes	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Database design and development	7.2	13.4	6.3	9.0
Selecting and maintaining automated systems	10.8	13.4	15.2	13.1
Using ABN	3.6	2.4	2.5	2.8
Applications of microcomputers	6.0	7.3	19.0	10.8
Use of AV resources and equipment	1.2	0.0	1.3	0.8
Identifying client needs	4.8	3.7	2.5	3.7
Client communication skills	2.4	1.2	5.1	2.9
Other areas specified by respondents	3.6	0.0	2.5	2.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	N = 83 Missing cases = 2	N = 82 Missing cases = 3	N = 79 Missing cases = 6	N = 81 Missing cases = 4

When priorities are totalled, areas seen as highest priorities for the future are:

Selecting and maintaining automated systems

Searching electronic sources of information

Application of microcomputers

Database design and development

Planning skills

It was anticipated that there would be more differences between present and future needs and priorities. However, it appears that there is considerable overlap between areas of need related to the participant's present position and those which are seen as important for future professional development.

4.13 Preferred modes of learning

For each of their priority areas, participants were asked to indicate preferred modes of learning. Seven choices, plus an 'other' category were given. Table 22 lists the results for present needs and Table 23 for future needs.

Table 22 Preferred mode -- 'To assist in present position'

	First Priority Area %	Second Priority Area %	Third Priority Area %	Total of Priorities 1-3 Averaged %
Inhouse training, staff development	20.5	16.9	20.0	19.1
Self-study: investigation, reading, correspondence courses	6.0	6.0	2.5	4.8
Formal continuing education activities (seminars, workshops, etc.)	60.2	56.6	56.3	57.7
Evening meetings, discussion groups	2.4	6.0	7.5	5.3
Visits to libraries/ information centres	2.4	7.2	3.7	4.4
Use of AV programs, (e.g. videocassette)	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.4
A course of formal study for an award (diploma, degree, masters)	4.8	6.0	8.8	6.5
Other	3.6	1.2	0.0	1.6
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	N = 83 Missing cases = 2	N = 83 Missing cases = 2	N = 80 Missing cases = 5	N = 82 Missing cases = 3

Table 10 Preferred mode of learning — to assist in future development

	First Priority Area %	Second Priority Area %	Third Priority Area %	Total of Priorities 1-3 Averaged %
Inhouse training, staff development	15.9	16.0	15.4	15.8
Self-study: investigation, reading, correspondence courses	6.1	2.5	5.1	4.6
Formal continuing education activities (seminars, workshops etc.)	57.3	59.3	60.3	59.0
Evening meetings, discussion groups	6.1	9.9	5.1	7.0
Visits to libraries/ information centres	4.9	1.2	1.3	2.5
Use of AV programs (e.g. videocassette)	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.4
A course of formal study for an award (diploma, degree masters)	6.1	9.9	11.5	9.2
Other	3.7	1.2	0.0	1.6
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	N = 82 Missing cases = 3	N = 81 Missing cases = 4	N = 78 Missing cases = 7	N = 80 Missing cases = 5

The majority of participants indicated a preference to improve their skills by attending continuing education courses over other modes of learning. This is consistently the case for both 'present' and 'future' needs across all areas.

'Inhouse training staff development' was seen as the preferred mode for between 16% and 20% of participants. The importance of this mode of learning dropped for areas to assist in future development.

Not unexpectedly, 'A course of formal study' was seen as more pertinent to future development than present needs.

4.14 Results summary

Heads of special libraries and information centres surveyed in this study indicated significant needs for continuing professional development. These needs were most heavily clustered around areas related to utilising technological developments and, to a lesser degree, management skills. However 'selecting and maintaining automated systems' may be seen as requiring considerable management skills in planning, implementation and evaluation of systems.

There was considerable overlap between needs seen as important to assist in the participant's present position and those needed for future professional development.

Participants indicated a relatively high level of activity in workshops, conferences and seminars, with 76.5% having attended one or more such activities in the last two years. Current members of the LAA attended more such activities than non-members.

The preferred mode of learning in priority areas was participation in formal continuing education activities. Constraints to participation in such activities were lack of time and the absence of suitable courses. Financial constraints were not a major consideration, and most costs involved were borne by employers.

The following section examines the implications of these findings for the organisations involved, special library and information centre managers and staffs, professional associations and educational institutions.

5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Disussion of results

The results of this study of Melbourne based special library and information centre managers indicate that there is a considerable need and demand for a wider range and number of continuing education, inhouse and post-basic courses for information specialists. These findings are consistent with other Australian studies, including those of McIntyre(42), Cook and Richardson(43), Trask(44) and Schauder(45).

As with Henderson's Canadian study(46) and the study of English university and polytechnic library staff by Konn and Roberts(47), the demand for formal courses for credit was substantially less than for shorter courses. While the present study did not seek to ascertain why this is so, it could reasonably be speculated that information specialists, like most people, would prefer to gain more expertise over a lesser time and with less effort by doing a (shorter) continuing education course than a (longer) course of formal study.

The results of the Melbourne study confirm that special library and information centre managers are working in dynamic environments. Perceived needs for both present and future professional development focus heavily on areas which involve utilising technology to improve systems and services. There is also an awareness of the need for management skills, particularly in the areas of planning, staff relations and financial management.

These areas are echoed in the post-1979 studies reported in section 2.4. Weingard(48) reported that areas which appeared repeatedly included marketing techniques and 'keeping current' in technological developments; Bewley's UBC study (49) concluded that librarians were 'primarily, almost desperately anxious' to improve the understanding in the area of communications technology and skills in electronic data handling; Henderson(50) found a remarkably uniform desire for workshops in all aspects of management, administration and automation.

It should be mentioned that this study was conducted in April and May, 1985. In late June, 1985, a nationally sponsored LAA course on 'selecting and evaluating computerised systems' was held in Melbourne. This one day course with a fee of $90 for LAA members and $130 for non-members was over subscribed and attracted 34 participants. Most of the participants came from special libraries and information centres.

The Melbourne-based information specialists studied appear to be willing to participate in further professional development opportunities but see 'lack of time' and 'lack of suitable courses' as major constraints. Lack of time was seen as important constraint in Neal's CUNY study(51). Jurisdictional problems, rather than time and financial considerations were seen as constraints by participants in

Henderson's Alberta study(52).
The predominant source of funds to support the continuing professional development activities of the Melbourne information specialists came from the employing organisation. There was relatively little financial investment by individuals in professional development activities. Within the large libraries they surveyed, Konn and Roberts(53) reported discrepancies between senior managers and those who worked at junior levels concerning responsibility for professional development. Senior managers regarded individuals as playing a more significant part in planning professional development experiences than did those at junior levels. The latter felt that it was the library's responsibility to invest the time and effort on their behalf. Those managing special libraries and information centres in Melbourne, no matter how small in size, seem to be able to have their organisations fund a substantial portion of their expenses for activities such as conferences and seminars. However, it can also be argued that the amounts spent or invested are, in most cases, not substantial at this stage.

5.2 Responsibilities and Implications

If a need for a wide range and number of professional development opportunities has been identified, it is worth canvassing the issue of responsibility for meeting those needs.

Responsibilities for meeting the range of an individual's continuing professional development needs are shared amongst organisations as employers, educational institutions, professional associations and the individuals themselves. It is not particularly easy to assign different responsibilities to each of these groups as, from both the individual's and the employer's viewpoints, organisational and personal requirements tend to overlap. The 'present' and 'future' continuing education needs of individuals reported in this study indicated a considerable amount of overlap.

Employers have a primary responsibility to provide staff development programs for their employees. This is a responsibility which some acknowledge and act upon more readily than others.

The problem for many people working in special libraries and information centres is that there may be very few information service professionals on the staff. It is then rather difficult (even with the required motivation) for, say, a bank or mining company's staff development officer to design an appropriate program for a librarian or chief information officer or library technician. It may in fact require more motivation on both the employer's and the individual's part to design such a program. Inhouse programs, developed with the assistance of education and training institutions may be more rewarding in the long term, than sending employees out of the organisation.

Educational institutions have a responsibility to design and implement award courses or courses for credit, where they perceive that there is a need. Australian tertiary institutions are not funded and staffed to provide (short) continuing education activities. Staffing allocations are on the basis of student quotas for courses or on the number of students enrolled. Thus teaching duties are understandably usually given first priority. In the experience of the researchers, most schools and institutions conducting continuing education activities in the library and information services area do so out of a sense of professional responsibility. The cost of staff members' time in organising and presenting such activities is usually not included in the budget or returned by way of course fees.

In the long term, it may be more effective for institutions to offer more post-basic courses rather than organise more ad hoc continuing education workshops and seminars.

The third group with major responsibilities for continuing professional development are professional associations. Over 63% of the participants in the study were LAA members while others belonged to a range of associations related to their background and current work. Many of those who were members of professional associations held multiple memberships.

In the past two years, the LAA has reviewed its continuing education policies and activities in the light of changing educational, economic and technological circumstances, as well as members' expectations. When the LAA's Continuing Education officer resigned, the Association decided not to reappoint a Continuing Education officer immediately, but to use those funds in a different way. Branches, sections and divisions are now asked to identify priority Continuing Education areas and seek national funds for those activities which they cannot develop and implement themselves, or which require some investment of 'risk funds'. These activities are then put out to tender.

Successful tenderers for nationally funded Continuing Education activities mounted in 1985 included LAA branches and groups themselves, library and information studies schools, large libraries, management consultancy companies, freelancers and consortia which included a number of these components.

While this process is still relatively new, the tendering arrangements have resulted in the emergence and identification of a wider range of potential Continuing Education providers for library and information service workers. At the same time, different groups within this professional association have used the opportunity to look carefully at their programs to see where members can get best value for their money.

It is worth noting here that no organisation or institution in Australia receives government funding for improving professional development opportunities for information professionals, other than for 'for credit' or formal courses.

Over the past few years, there appears to have been an increase in the number of non-profit and for-profit organisations established or available to meet demands in this area. The establishment of the Australian Information Management Association (AIMA) in 1985 and the tendering for LAA Continuing Education activities by management consultancy companies are examples of this.

Professional associations and organisations in other countries, such as the United Kingdom's Aslib, have a much larger population base from which to attract participants and create some 'economies of scale' by being able to regularly repeat courses. Due to a smaller population base dispersed over a very wide geographic area, these 'economies of scale' are not as readily available to continuing education providers in Australia.

5.3 Conclusions

The findings of this study and Schauder's reported earlier indicate that individuals recognise considerable continuing professional development needs in order to assist them in their present positions and in their own future development. Those working in special libraries and information centres may have to work hard within their own organisations to alert senior management and personnel officers to their particular needs. As there is no comparable data available for other sectors of the Australian library and information workforce, it is difficult to assess, objectively, how the information specialists in the present study compare in terms of participation and opportunities with their colleagues in other areas.

However, the researchers' experiences and knowledge of the Australian scene, together with the Australian, North American and United Kingdom literature analysed would indicate that those in other areas of the information workforce also have significant needs, particularly in the areas of utilisation of technological developments and management skills.

The following steps are seen as necessary in order to make real improvements to meet the needs for present and future professional development for information service professionals:

1. Encouragement of learning modes in initial and pre-service courses which encourage individuals to accept responsibility for their own learning and future professional development.

2. Recognition that continuing professional development activities cost time and money to develop and implement.

3. Recognition that continuing professional development needs can be met by a variety and mix of learning modes.

4. Cooperative program development by employers, educational institutions and professional and other associations in areas identified in this study.

5. The development of post-basic formal courses of study which combine the management-technology-information needs identified in this study.

6. Greater personal and institutional investment of time and money in continuing professional development.

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APPENDIX A Interview Schedule

STUDY OF INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS

THEIR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

RMIT Department of Librarianship

April 1985

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for agreeing to be part of the study. It is much appreciated.

The questions I am going to ask will focus on four main areas:

- your organisation or workplace

- some information about your educational and professional background

- some questions on your continuing professional development needs

- and your professional development activities in recent times

Case Number _____ (1-3) ☐☐☐

ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION

I'd like to start by asking you some questions about _____

_____ (name of organisation).

1. Which of the following best describes the type of organisation in which you currently work? (4) ☐

   1. State government department
   2. State statutory authority
   3. Commonwealth government department
   4. Commonwealth statutory authority
   5. For profit company
   6. Non-profit company or organisation

2. Approximately how many people does your organisation/ department/company employ? (i.e. the constituency served by the library/information service, e.g. the State branch of a Commonwealth government department) (5) ☐

   1. Less than 5
   2. 5 - 10
   3. 11 - 20
   4. 21 - 100
   5. 101 - 250
   6. Over 250

3. What is your organisation's field of specialisation? (6) ☐

   1. Engineering, Architecture
   2. Law
   3. Education, Social Policy
   4. Australiana, Arts, History
   5. Health, Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing
   6. Business, Finance, Administration, Management
   7. Science, Agriculture, Environment, Mining
   8. Other

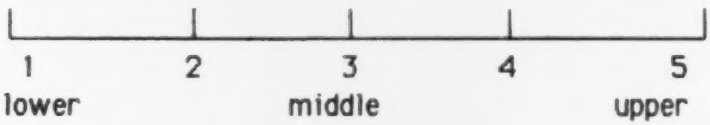
4. What is the title of your present position?

_____ (7)☐

5. How many years have you been in this position? (8)☐

1. Less than one year
2. 1 - 3 years
3. 4 - 6 years
4. 7 - 10 years
5. 11 - 20 years
6. Over 20 years

6. Which level best describes your formal level of responsibility within the organisation's structure? Please indicate a position on the following scale: (9)☐



7. Do you supervise any other members of staff? (10)☐

1. Yes 2. No

8. If so, how many? (Include professional, paraprofessional and non-professional) (11)☐

1. 1 - 3
2. 4 - 6
3. 7 - 10
4 11 - 20
5. Over 20
9. N/A

9. Please estimate the total amount of money (costs and expenses) spent by you and/or your organization on your continuing professional development activities in the past two years.

1. None
2. Up to $200
3. $200 - $600
4. $600 - $1,000
5. $1,000 - $2,000
6. $2,000 - $4,000
7. More than $4,000 (12) ☐

10. Please estimate the percentage of overall costs and expenses met by the following:

Yourself 1. 0% 2. 1-25% 3. 26-50% 4. 51-75% 5. 76-100% (13) ☐

Your Organisation
1. 0% 2. 1-25% 3. 26-50% 4. 51-75% 5. 76-100% (14) ☐

Others 1. 0% 2. 1-25% 3. 26-50% 4. 51-75% 5. 76-100% (15) ☐

11. Would you be willing to indicate the range into which your salary falls? If not, I understand, and we can go on to the next question. (16) ☐

0. Declined to respond
1. Less than $15,000
2. $15,000 - $20,000
3. $20,001 - $26,000
4. $26,001 - $34,000
5. Over $34,000

ABOUT YOU

Now I'd like to ask a number of questions about your educational and professional background.

12. Do you hold any tertiary qualifications? (17) ☐

    1. Yes 2. No

    If 'Yes' go to the next question.
    If 'No' go to Question 14.

13. If so, could you indicate these (e.g. degrees, diplomas) and the final year of study for each. (Exclude LAA and LA Registration examinations).

    _____

    _____

    _____

    (Interviewer to code these as indicated below)

    Highest Level (18) ☐

    1. Undergraduate Diploma
    2. Degree
    3. Postgraduate Diploma
    4. Masters Degree and Higher

    Last Completion Date (19) ☐

    1. 1982 - 1984
    2. 1979 - 1981
    3. 1975 - 1978
    4. Before 1975

14. Are you currently engaged in any studies towards gaining a tertiary (or further tertiary) qualification? (20) ☐

    1. Yes 2. No

15. If so, what is the level of this qualification? (21) ☐

1. Undergraduate Diploma
2. Degree
3. Postgraduate Diploma
4. Masters Degree or Higher

16. Are you <u>eligible</u> for Associate membership of the Library Association of Australia? (22) ☐

1. Yes 2. No

17. If so, was your eligibility gained through: (23) ☐

1. LAA or LA Registration Examinations
2. A recognised Australian course in librarianship or information science
3. Recognition of an overseas award in librarianship or information science
4. Other _____
9. N/A

18. In which year was study for this qualification completed? (24) ☐

1. 1983 - 1984
2. 1980 - 1982
3. 1975 - 1979
4. 1970 - 1974
5. Before 1970
9. N/A

19. Are you currently engaged in any studies towards a qualification in librarianship or information science? (25) ☐

1. Yes 2. No

20. Are you, in fact <u>currently</u> a member of the Library Association of Australia? (26) ☐

1. Yes 2. No

21. Are you a member of any other professional associations (excluding unions)? (27) ☐

1. Yes 2. No

22. If so, could you list these for me please? (28) ☐

_____

_____

_____

ABOUT YOUR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

23. Have you attended any workshops, conferences or seminars (other than inhouse ones) in the last two years, e.g. those organised by the LAA, Australian Institute of Management or tertiary institutions?

1. Yes 2. No (29) ☐

If so, could you indicate the sponsoring organisations for these activities: _____

_____

24. How many such activities have you attended in the last two years? (30) ☐

1. 1 - 2
2. 3 - 5
3. 6 - 10
4. Over 10
9. N/A

25. People sometimes find it difficult to participate in courses or other activities. Could you indicate if any of the following are usually major or minor constraints to your involvement in continuing professional development activities?

	Major Constraint	Minor Constraint	No Constraint	
Lack of time outside work				(31) ☐
No time release from work				(32) ☐
Payment of fees/expenses				(33) ☐
Lack of suitable courses				(34) ☐
Lack of motivation - no need				(35) ☐
Venue/Location unsuitable				(36) ☐
Duration/Too long				(37) ☐

26. Have you attended any formal inhouse training sessions provided by your organization in the last two years?

1. Yes 2. No (38) ☐
9. Organisation does not offer such sessions

27. If so, please list them. (39) ☐

_____

_____

_____

_____

28. If you are interested in undertaking a formal course of study, could you indicate the type of course you would prefer, by area/content (e.g. management, technology, librarianship) and level (e.g. degree, graduate diploma, masters course):

_____ (40) ☐

_____

ABOUT YOUR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We are interested in your views on two different aspects of professional development needs:

- those directly related to your present job, and
- those you feel that are important to your own professional development, especially in the future.

These may overlap in some areas.

By **need** we mean a discrepancy between your **current** level of performance and your **desired** level of performance.

Could you go through this list of areas with me and indicate whether you currently have a **high** (H), **medium** (M), or **low** (L) level of need or **no need** (N) at all in each area.

Notes to the interviewer: Hand one copy of the next pages to the interviewee. Mark the interviewee's responses on **your** interview schedule.

Management Skills

Area	To assist in present position	To assist your development in the future	
1. Financial management	H M L N		(40) ☐
		H M L N	(41) ☐
2. Staff relations (Management of library/ information centre staff)	H M L N		(42) ☐
		H M L N	(43) ☐
3. Time management	H M L N		(44) ☐ ☐
		H M L N	(45)
4. Problem solving skills	H M L N		(46) ☐ ☐
		H M L N	(47)
5. Planning skills	H M L N		(48) ☐
		H M L N	(49) ☐
6. Organisational communication skills	H M L N		(50) ☐ ☐
		H M L N	(51)
7. Meeting skills	H M L N		(52) ☐
		H M L N	(53) ☐

Technical Knowledge and Skills

8. Sources of information in particular subject areas. Please list any such areas:	H M L N		(54) ☐
_____		H M L N	(55) ☐
_____			
_____			
_____			
_____			

Area	To assist in present position	To assist your development in the future	
9. Selecting and acquiring resources for a service/ collection	H M L N	H M L N	(56) ☐ (57) ☐
10. Searching electronic sources of information (databases, online searching etc)	H M L N	H M L N	(58) ☐ (59) ☐
11. Cataloguing using AACR2	H M L N	H M L N	(60) ☐ (61) ☐
12. Indexing	H M L N	H M L N	(62) ☐ (63) ☐
13. Selection and use of relevant thesauri and subject heading lists	H M L N	H M L N	(64) ☐ (65) ☐
14. Constructing thesauri	H M L N	H M L N	(66) ☐ (67) ☐
15. Choice and use of classification schemes	H M L N	H M L N	(68) ☐ (69) ☐
16. Database design and development	H M L N	H M L N	(70) ☐ (71) ☐
17. Selecting and maintaining automated systems	H M L N	H M L N	(72) ☐ (73) ☐

Area	To assist in present position	To assist in your development in the future	
18. Using ABN	H M L N		(74) ☐
		H M L N	(75) ☐
19. Applications of microcomputers	H M L N		(76) ☐
		H M L N	(77) ☐
20. Use of audiovisual resources and equipment	H M L N		(78) ☐
		H M L N	(79) ☐

Client service knowledge and skills

Card 2

21. Identifying client needs	H M L N		(2/1) ☐
		H M L N	(2/2) ☐
22. Client communication skills (including reference interviewing techniques)	H M L N		(2/3) ☐
		H M L N	(2/4) ☐

Other areas we have not included:

23. _____	H M L N		☐
		H M L N	
24. _____	H M L N		☐
		H M L N	

(2/5-14)

Priorities

We are interested in your priorities for the areas listed above.

Could you indicate your three highest priorities for the next two years.

28. To assist you in your present position

Insert numbers according to Area numbers (i.e. 1 - 24) in the previous section.
(Note for interviewers: Complete the 'Preferred Mode' section after all priorities have been listed)

Card Two

Priority 1 = Area No ☐☐ (2/15-16) Preferred Mode ☐ (2/17)

Priority 2 = Area No ☐☐ (2/18-19) Preferred Mode ☐ (2/20)

Priority 3 = Area No ☐☐ (2/21-22) Preferred Mode ☐ (2/23)

29. To assist your development in the future

Priority 1 = Area No ☐☐ (2/24-25) Preferred Mode ☐ (2/26)

Priority 2 = Area No ☐☐ (2/27-28) Preferred Mode ☐ (2/29)

Priority 3 = Area No ☐☐ (2/30-31) Preferred Mode ☐ (2/32)

Preferred Mode

For those areas you have listed as priorities, could you now indicate your preferred mode of learning:

1. Inhouse training, staff development
2. Self-study: investigation, reading or correspondence courses
3. Formal continuing education activities (seminars,workshops etc)
4. Evening meetings, discussion groups
5. Visits to libraries/information centres
6. Use of audiovisual programs ((eg videocassette)
7. A course of formal study for an award (degree, diploma, masters degree)
8. Other (Please specify) _____

_____

_____

_____

That concludes the main questions we wanted to ask.

Are there any comments you would like to make which we haven't covered? Or is there anything you would like to expand on?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your cooperation. It is much appreciated.

APPENDIX B Cover letter

ROYAL MELBOURNE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

GPO BOX 2476V
Melbourne Vic 3001
Ph 660 2900

April 2 1985

Dear Colleague

Re: Study of Continuing Professional Development of Information Specialists

As a professional working in a special library or information centre, you would be aware that people with positions in organisations such as yours are working in dynamic environments. Demands on time and services tend to be increasing without there necessarily being any concurrent increase in inputs to work areas.

The continuing professional development of information specialists is of paramount concern to those who wish to meet the challenge of change and to maintain and improve the levels of service to their organisations.

But what are these professional development needs? Whose responsibility is it to meet these needs? What professional development opportunities are currently available to information specialists? How well do organisations support the professional development needs of their information specialists? What range of professional development opportunities would information specialists like to be available for their continuing professional development.

Staff and students from the Department of Librarianship at RMIT are planning to undertake a study of the professional development needs of special librarians and information specialists in Melbourne in the first half of 1985. The study is part of a number of developments at RMIT aimed at meeting the needs of professional information workers.

As part of the study, staff and students involved in the fourth year Research Methods subject will be seeking to interview a substantial number of Melbourne-based library and information work professionals. The interviews are scheduled for mid- to late-April and will take approximately thirty minutes.

This study is being conducted with the cooperation of and assistance from the LAA's national Special Libraries Section. We hope to incorporate the results of the study into a session of the First Asian-Pacific Special and Law Librarians Conference in Melbourne in September 1985. However of course details of individuals and organisations will in no way be identified. All information will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

We will be organizing interview times for mid- April. We do hope you will be able to cooperate in this study as we think it will provide some mutually beneficial information.

We look forward to further contact.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Broadbent

Marianne Broadbent
Senior Lecturer
Department of Librarianship

Kerry Grosser

Kerry Grosser
Lecturer
Department of Librarianship